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ABSTRACT

The National Association for Developmental Education (NADE) has developed a strategic plan for guiding its members into the next century. The plan takes into account political, institutional, economic, and instructional trends predicted to have an effect on the course of developmental education. Developmental educators also must plan for the current and future education environments, and they can choose their future actions with the help of the seven principles outlined by Steven Covey in his "Seven Habits of Highly Effective People." These principles are summarized as: (1) be proactive; (2) begin with the end in mind; (3) put first things first; (4) think win-win; (5) seek first to understand, and then to be understood; (6) synergize; and (7) sharpen the saw (continue to invest in yourself). (SLD)

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Learning and Teaching in the 21st Century: Seven Habits of Highly Effective Developmental Educators

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Learning and Teaching in the 21st Century:
Seven Habits of Highly Effective Developmental Educators

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As I thought about my text for this article, I reflected about a book that has been both personally and professionally helpful for me. I do my best to draw lessons both from my life experiences and books that I read. From those I try to develop principles to help guide me when making decisions in the future. Taking liberty with the title of Stephen's Covey best-selling book, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, the seven principles discussed in his book can serve as a plan for developmental educators and learning support professionals.

Overview of Megatrends at the Institutional, State and National Level

NADE has developed a strategic plan for guiding the association and its members into the next century. It was critical that the plan was not developed in isolation from the cultural, economic, and political forces that will have an impact upon it. Some of the trends NADE endorses. Others it does not. But we have to recognize that these trends are active forces that have to be dealt with [Link to NADE Strategic Plan, straplan.htm].

Following is several megatrends that has an impact upon our services to students. A complete overview of the trends and some of the false beliefs that are helping to support them are available [Link to trends, trends.htm]. Policies that have been developed or proposed at the local, state and national levels are often based upon these megatrends [Link to policies, devstate.htm].

- *Political trends*: Accountability by policy makers will increase. It is very popular to blame the high schools and parents for producing a generation of developmental students. As a culture, America spends a great deal of time in affixing blame for social ills. However, blaming does not solve problems. Rather than directing energy to fixing the problem, it fuels more anger.

  Seeking a party to blame, some policy makers want to fine the high schools from which they graduated. Plans are being considered in Florida, Montana, New Jersey, Washington, and West Virginia to require a high school district to pay for the cost of providing developmental course work at a state institution. Casper College in Wyoming has already implemented such a plan.

  Policy makers in many states believe that the national movement for increased requirements for high school graduation has eliminated or lessened the need for postsecondary academic support and developmental courses. On the contrary, as entrance standards are raised, faculty expectation levels often rises even more quickly. Recently when entrance standards were raised for the California State

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University system, the mathematics department on one campus raised their required pass rate for the departmental screening test even higher. More students were placed into the developmental courses *AFTER* the increased entrance standards than before.

- *Institutional Trends*: There will be an increasing recognition by institutional leaders and faculty members that students from all levels of academic preparation need learning assistance in one or more of their courses every academic term.

- *Economic Trends:* Learning assistance centers that have research-based evidence of positive student outcomes are viewed by many policy makers as important components of enrollment management and student retention programs.

- *Instructional Trends*: More institutions are establishing learning- and teaching-effectiveness centers to assist with faculty development and to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of student learning. Some are outgrowths of current learning assistance centers.

Responding to the Current Education Environment

Rather than reacting to others, we must choose own actions. After developing some level of understanding of the current environment, the next place to turn is to see if there are basic principles that can guide my choice of future actions. That is where Steven Covey's book, Seven Habits of Highly Effective People fits with this discussion. Covey interviewed many successful people in order to understand if there were basic principles that helped guide their lives.

His qualitative research identified the following seven:

1. **Be proactive**
2. **Begin with the End in mind**
3. **Put first things first**
4. **Think win-win**
5. **Seek first to understand . . . Then to be understood**
6. **Synergize**
7. **Sharpen the saw**

We can use these seven principles to help guide our actions as we improve our ability to provide access, equity and success for our students.

1. Be proactive.

Rather than giving in to the natural reaction to be defensive, now is the time for us to take the initiative. This is one time that apathy is our friend. Most people will get out of the

way of people who have a clear plan. Upper level administrators at our institutions are looking for leadership from the faculty and staff.

- If you are not already doing so, conduct detailed studies on the impact of your program in terms of increased academic performance, reenrollment and graduation rates for the students. Either by yourself or in tandem with others, develop an institutional definition of which students should be in your data study. And do the study every year. If you do not have the expertise to do the study, seek out colleagues in the education, math or other departments that would be interested in being partners with you. Programs that cannot document their effectiveness are at severe risk for elimination.

- Volunteer for the student retention or enrollment management committee. If it does not exist, do what you can to have one formed. Learning centers can often become the center piece for student retention programs since we often work with assessment, institutional research data, new student orientation, extended orientation, tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, developmental courses, academic advising.

- Publish an annual report on the activities of your learning center. Include both qualitative and quantitative studies. Show how your center is in line with written institutional mission statements. Share your strategic plan for the future direction of the center and how it contributes to overall student retention and graduation rates. Disseminate the report to various policy makers on campus. At UMKC we publish an annual report of about 200 pages. About half of it is a narrative and other half are appendices. It reminds folks who we are and what we have done for them lately. It also serves as an excellent encyclopedia of all our activities and is often used throughout the year for requested reports or for more information. We have now placed major portions of the report on our Center's Internet homepage [Link to CAD homepage, http://www.umkc.edu/cad/].

- Get involved politically. Write letters. Make telephone calls. The only reason that TRIO is alive today is through the work of thousands of students, parents, TRIO staff members, and community members who flooded congressional offices with short, thoughtful messages. Working through your campus procedures, invite local state and national legislators to your campus for a tour of the learning center. Legislators need to put a face on learning assistance and developmental education programs.

- Expand your learning assistance center into new areas of service. We as professionals are experts on learning and teaching. We can share what we know in a variety of ways. For example, at UMKC we serve as the trainers for all new graduate teaching assistants. We conduct five two-hour workshops on classroom assessment techniques, student learning styles, constructing tests, leading class discussions.

2. Begin with the End in mind.

What do we want our academic assistance program to look like in ten years? Fix that image in your mind now. What do we need to do in order to become that image? I know from personal experience how the press of the daily emergencies and routine paperwork drowns out my attention to the future. One of the most valuable activities that I did at the Kellogg Institute was designing a learning center for the 21st century.

During the process of developing a strategic plan for NADE, we thought about what we wanted NADE to look like in the future. The following vision statement was developed. ***By 2003, NADE will be a nationally recognized association of professionals with expertise to help students academically succeed throughout the entire educational experience from high school through college and graduate/professional school.***

Parts of the vision statement have already been accomplished. Others will take more time. I think that sometimes our profession has limited it scope of interest and influence. Often we have focused on the most academically needy students. This fall NADE will propose to its members to chance the mission statement of the association. Formally it stated that NADE's mission was to create knowledge, train its members, etc. While important activities, it is time for the association to more clearly state its mission to its own members, upper level campus administrators, state and national policy makers, and the general public.

The new mission statement is the following. ***The purpose of NADE is to increase the academic success of students.*** Note what that statement says, and does not say. It does not set limits on which students should be supported. It does not say at what academic level these students reside. It allows our association to expand its vision to serve all students on campus, not just those with lower predicted chances for success. Our centers can grow into new areas of service to faculty members in the academic departments by becoming learning and teaching centers. It allows us to build partnerships with high school faculty members and welcome them into the association as colleagues with common interests. Faculty members from academic departments can view us as a resource for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning environment that they create with their courses. It tells policy makers that our focus is on the success of our students and not just on protecting our jobs. If we take care of our students and policy makers understand the value of our academic assistance centers, our employment future will be secure.

I learned a new word the other day. A business person was talking about how he had to change his business due to the impact of technology. He had to *"repurpose"* himself. Repurposing is thinking outside the normal limits and seeing new possibilities. I see our center at UMKC as the **Learning and Teaching Center**. This Center serves all students and faculty members, not just those who are having difficulty. Our Center is about increasing the effectiveness of learning for all students and the productivity of teaching for all faculty members. The professional literature is spending time talking about educational

productivity. A sample of some of the initiatives that other institutions are taking is available [Link to summary, lrnteacn.htm]. The document also provides several books, periodicals, and resource organizations concerned with faculty development and learning/teaching issues. An overview of some current trends and issues with increasing the effectiveness of education is available. [Link to summary, dalern97.htm].

We can repurpose our programs through the following means:

- Move beyond study skills classes. In "Ten recommendations from research for teaching high-risk college students," Stahl, Simpson and Hayes said, "Students need to learn more than how to develop and when to employ the [learning] strategies, however. They also need to learn how to transfer specific strategies to the particular academic literacy demands of each course. Indeed, without effective training for transfer, college reading and learning courses face the very real danger of standing in isolation from the academic disciplines and of remaining mired in the deficit model. Strategy transfer occurs more naturally when students have a chance to practice the newly learned strategies on their own texts and with tasks perceived to be 'real'." In 1993 Kerr wrote about the difference between 'detached' and 'embedded' programs in the teaching of study skills or strategies. The more traditional approach of 'detached' programs involves the presentation of study techniques in isolation. In contrast, 'embedded' programs present learning and study strategies within the context of specific content and are more likely to result in regular use. They must be integrated and interwoven into the fabric of instruction. We must find ways to embed study strategy instruction into actual course content.

  Embedding study strategies in the course content can be done in various of ways:

  (1) The first way to embed the strategies is to develop adjunct courses to accompany content courses. Georgia State University had an article published in the NADE Selected Conferences titled, "From DS to LS: The Expansion of an Academic Preparation Program from Developmental Studies to Learning Support" [Link to article, cccpap96.htm]. It reported how Georgia State using adjunct courses -- conducted by composition, reading and mathematics units -- offered learning support to students coregistered in content courses such as history and mathematics. The first adjunct course offering was a pilot for developmental studies students who were required to take the exit level course of the reading sequence. Students who met this and other academic requirements were allowed to enroll in "Learning Strategies for History" (LSH072) in place of their required reading course. This adjunct course was paired with "Introduction to American History" (HIS113). Participants received five quarter hours institutional credit (not counted toward a degree but included in the calculation of tuition) for LSH072 and they also received five hours credit toward their degree for HIS113. The curriculum of LSH072 focuses on three main instructional components: (a) typical study and learning strategies such as time management, annotating texts, outlining, note taking, reading comprehension, memory, and

testwiseness; (b) students' metacognitive awareness through learning logs, weekly observations of student behaviors, and learning styles inventories; and (c) historiography, or ways of reading, writing, and thinking, that give structure to the study of history (Commander & Smith, 1995).

(2) The second way to embed study strategies into courses is through offering Supplemental Instruction for students in historically difficult courses for many students. Supplemental Instruction provides a way to integrate *what to learn* with *how to learn*. Video-based Supplemental Instruction is the newest variation of this model for students who need a more intensive experience of learning how to apply study strategies immediately with difficult course work. These programs are nonremedial and assist students develop the needed learning strategies while they are currently enrolled in college degree credit courses. More information about SI and VSI are found are available [Links to several SI and VSI articles, sidata97.htm, sibib97.htm, vsianprt.htm, and jbvsi94.htm] as well as the Si homepage at http://www.umkc.edu/cad/

(3) A third method to embed study strategies and academic support into college credit courses is to train graduate teaching assistants and faculty members to embed the study strategies themselves. This is occurring in other countries. Our experience in implementing SI in other countries has consistently resulted in faculty members attending our workshops to learn how they can implement changes in their class lectures -- often using SI strategies -- to help students to learn more. And, in some countries the appropriations from the government to the individual institution could be reduced if the teaching quality does not increase. It is only a matter of time before this outcome-based funding formula comes to the U.S.

- Another way to repurpose our program is to identify research-based learning assistance models to adopt. Search the professional literature and attend conference sessions that feature programs that can empirically document the effectiveness of their programs. Study the national research from the Exxon Research Project on Developmental Education to identify the characteristics of effective programs: centralized administration of learning assistance services, academic assessment, prior training of tutors, rigorous evaluation of all program components. Use NADE's Self-Study Guides to evaluate your tutoring services, adjunct instructional programs (e.g., Supplemental Instruction, Treisman workshop format), and developmental courses.

3. Put first things first.

Spend several hours each week on taking practical steps on making the future occur now. Take out your schedule and plan in specific times on specific days. Keep your promise to work during those times, treating them like a major committee meeting that could not be moved. Close your door during those times and do not allow yourself to be distracted. Maybe that is spending a few hours writing a professional publication, grant application, or

developing curriculum materials for the graduate teaching assistant workshop to be offered six months from now.

4. Think win-win.

People generally act from self-interest. It is human nature. Devise ways that your plans can help others. Work with other departments on campus. The more that learning assistance and developmental programs are viewed as integrated with the rest of academic affairs, the safer they generally are. We are fortunate at UMKC that we have dual reporting responsibility to both student and academic affairs. Isolated learning assistance programs that appear to be in constant turf battles with other departments are at severe risk. As shared earlier, find ways to involve other faculty members with your program. Maybe they can assist with research projects, staff training programs, or other activities.

5. Seek first to understand . . . Then to be understood.

For an hour every once in a while listen to Rush Limbaugh. Read some of the commentaries made by conservative newspaper columnists. Whether we want to agree with them or not, their statements and the ensuing discussion give a picture of how many current policy makers are thinking. We need to understand the new Republican majority if order to influence it. It is no small fact the Republicans renamed the House Committee on Education. The new name is the *House Committee on Education and Economic Opportunity*. It suggests that these legislators think that education should be directly linked with economic opportunity. We need to use the language of the new majority. There are people of good will on both sides of the education issue. It will be tragic if we are unable to effectively communicate our position. Education programs must display documented results. Education can no longer expect to be funded on the basis of promises of future activities and results. This is the reason I suggested that you engage in both qualitative and quantitative research studies on an annual basis. I fear that good programs that do not do their research studies will be reduced or eliminated.

6. Synergize.

The basic definition of synergy is that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. I think that we often do not appreciate how much we know and can do. We are experts in learning theory and its application. We know and practice the art of good teaching. Through of our work we spend a great deal of time dealing with assessment and institutional research data. We work with programs often cited for their impact on student retention: new student orientation, tutoring, academic advising, Supplemental Instruction, developmental course work, study strategies course and the like. We need to repackage this expertise and use it to influence policy makers that we are on the cutting edge of improved learning systems and can make a significant difference for all students on our campus, not just the developmental ones.

There is a major paradigm shift occurring in higher education. After a long period of time of focusing on teaching, there is a healthy shift to focusing on learning. While the instructional paradigm often focuses on increasing the quantity of information, the learning paradigm focuses on the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning process regarding what does the students know and what can they do with the new information. Many classroom professors are searching for effective ways to change from a transmission mode of instruction to a focus on improving the learning and mastery of content material by students. This represents a change from being teacher-centered to learning-centered. Another trend impacting upon higher education is a change in the focus of student academic support and enrichment. In the past some institutions focused their attention by serving only students at the far extremes, developmental students and honors students. I think that the new trend will be to serve all students at the institution regarding academic excellence and persistence toward achievement of their academic degrees.

Most writers agree that the majority of faculty members want to improve the learning environment. They have tremendous content knowledge. However, we as learning assistance professionals possess some of the knowledge and skill that would be helpful to faculty members as they seek to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process. There are no better experts in the learning process than those who are in our profession. Many developmental educators possess knowledge and skills in one or more of the following areas: peer collaborative learning, informal classroom assessment techniques, new paradigms of student learning pedagogy, instructional technology, affective domain needs of students, curriculum development, peer reviews of teaching activities, professional development activities, adapting instruction for diverse learning styles, and other areas.

At my institution we often consult with faculty members on improving instructional delivery, integrate emerging technology with instructional delivery systems, conduct new faculty member orientation and instructional training programs, and host faculty development programs. We have been invited by faculty members and academic departments because of the reputation we have with supporting academic development of students at all levels within the institution. Functionally we have become a teaching and learning center. This provides an excellent way to integrate ourselves more deeply into the academic community. We are all partners in the learning process.

There are several ways that our learning assistance centers can provide assistance to other academic units on campus. In several of the examples the center uses existing programs and have adapted them for use as faculty development experiences.

- At UMKC our learning center helps to conduct the training of new graduate teaching assistants. We provide workshops on how to embed study strategies, use collaborative learning strategies and other topics. When Supplemental Instruction student leaders are trained in two-day workshops, faculty members from the classes where they will be assigned are invited to attend the workshops as well. Faculty members observe the various collaborative learning and embed study strategy activities and select ones to incorporate into their own classroom activities. The practice of faculty members

attending SI leader workshops is frequently reported from institutions in Africa and Europe.

- The Educational Development Center at Central Missouri State University coordinates the campus new student orientation course. The original purpose of the course was for faculty development. Instructors for the course are drawn from volunteers throughout the campus. Many of them are faculty members receive in lieu of extra pay funds that can be used for professional development activities of their choice. In addition, orientation teachers gather on a weekly basis to discuss common course issues and share strategies on effective teaching.

- At Anne Arundel Community College the campus Supplemental Instruction program is used as a vehicle for faculty development. Faculty members are recruited to serve as mentors of the SI study review sessions that occur outside of class for other professors in academic departments outside of their own. The purpose of this is to place the faculty mentor in an area which is familiar (e.g., science), but not an area where they are an expert. This helps to avoid the potential problem of the faculty mentor from criticizing the content delivery of the course. For example, a professor in biology might serve as a mentor for the SI sessions for a chemistry course. As the mentor professor observes the student led sessions and offers suggestions to the SI leader, they have an opportunity to reflect about their own approach to the course material and hear student comments regarding the academic issues that they are dealing with. The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education has twice provided grants to Anne Arundel Community College to disseminate information about this method for faculty development and renewal. [Link to articles, rwment90.htm and rwment96.htm]. Another approach to using SI as a vehicle for faculty renewal was experienced at Salem State College. [Link to article, jbfacd94.htm]

- Another forum for feedback to professors can be through the SI leader. If the faculty member invites the SI leader to do so, the student leader can report anonymous feedback to the course professor concerning what the students do and do not understand about the lectures. This is a common practice for faculty members for the University of Port Elizabeth in South Africa.

7. Sharpen the saw.

Continue to invest in yourself. I feel like I am preaching to the choir on this point since you are here at this conference. Attending conferences and reading widely in areas related to learning assistance is critical to see the connections between our profession and our colleagues. We must increase our skill in working with educational technology. Work on advanced degrees is often critical for establishing credibility with colleagues and upper level administrators.

Conclusion

We have a wonderful opportunity to control and shape our destiny. The Seven Habits' principles work in all areas of our lives. Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People are not unique. Many of the world's great religions and philosophies said them first, and maybe with even more eloquence. But I hope you can see how we can apply those principles to help us be more effective as educational leaders. We need to learn to reinvent ourselves as resources for the entire campus -- students and faculty alike -- in renewing the learning environment. Our institutions need for our centers and departments to expand our services to include academic enrichment for all students. I exhort you to find ways to make your existing departments more comprehensive in its services. The profession must continue the process of being main streamed into the academic life of college. Whatever the name for your center or department, become a more comprehensive learning center in service. I believe that is the bright future for our profession. Let us put ***"First things First"*** and begin today.

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